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(58) Field of search
B6A

(54) **Security marking of information-bearing stickers, transfers, labels and the like**

(57) A secondary overmarking is made on both the information-bearing item and a small area surrounding it of the article on which the item is fixed. The overmarking is invisible and may comprise a series of parallel lines, patterns, advertising or other text. One form of marking material is an ink visible only in the presence of ultra violet radiation; other materials could be phosphor based solutions or heat sensitive inks. In the case of the item being a price label, the overmarking may be applied by the label-applying roller of a hand-held pricing gun.

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SPECIFICATION

Method of security marking

5 This invention relates to a method of providing security markings on information bearing items, such as stickers, transfers, labels, etc., which are fixed to articles for hire, sales or lease, whereby to protect against the unauthorised removal and replacements of those items.

10 It is an established fact that the removal of pricing labels from products displayed for sale purposes in stores and shops, and their consequent replacement with labels of lesser value is probably one of the largest causes of loss of revenue equal to or in excess of losses due to direct theft.

15 It is an aim of the invention to provide a marking method which enables an authorised person to detect the removal and replacement, or alteration, of the information bearing item on an article.

20 The present invention provides a method of security marking of information bearing items in which a secondary over-marking is made on both the item and a small area surrounding it of the article on which the item is fixed, the overmarking being of a invisible nature so that it is not readily apparent without the assistance of additional equipment to observe such markings.

25 The markings may be in the form of a series of parallel lines, patterns, advertising or other text and would extend to areas of the article beyond the information bearing item. Thus if the item is removed and replaced, the replacement item will either not bear any secondary markings or if it does they will not align with those on the article, and thus will be readily apparent to an authorised person using the above mentioned additional equipment.

30 One form of marking material is an ink visible only in the presence of ultra violet radiation; other materials could be phosphor based solutions, heat sensitive inks and other chemically produced or naturally occurring substances meeting the above requirements.

35 With respect to the fixing of pricing labels to articles for sale, it is common practice to use a hand held gun which carries a roll of blank labels and which on depression of a handle causes (1) a price to be marked on the label and (2) to direct the marked label to a roller located at an end of the gun remote from the handle whereby to enable the user to apply the marked label to the surface of an article by rolling the roller along that surface.

40 To carry out the present method, I propose to replace the roller of the hand held gun with a specially produced applicator roller which is impregnated with the overmarking material or substance, so that as the priced label is being applied to the article the applicator roller will simultaneously cause the ejected label to be

overmarked. Conveniently the roller will be wider than the pricing label so that the overmarking will extend beyond all sides of the label.

70 The applicator roller may be manufactured from a microporous compound capable of holding within its structure a reservoir of the overmarking fluid, or the applicator roller may be supplied by a separate reservoir of overmarking fluid.

75 The peripheral surface of the applicator would carry the parallel lines, patterns, text, etc., which it is intended to overmark onto the pricing label.

80 In another method of applying the overmarkings, the applicator roller may be separate from the hand held pricing gun and the overmarkings would be applied after the priced label has been affixed to the article for sale.

85 It will be apparent that the removal or tampering with the pricing label will cause the continuous nature of the invisible overmarkings to be lost, and that this will be readily noticeable to an authorised person, at say a check out, where the necessary equipment to detect the invisible markings would be located.

90 In another application, the secondary overmaking would be provided by a 'rubber stamp' type of device which would be impregnated with the invisible marking fluid and which would be useful in protecting, for example, signatures on documents from fraudulent alternation.

CLAIM

It is claimed that this invention provides a unique method of providing and applying security markings. It is the aim of the invention to provide a marking method which enables an authorised person to detect the alteration of any item of information howsoever previously applied, whenever and wherever it is desired that detection of such alteration may be a requirement.

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